

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
OCALA DIVISION**

**MARCUS RAPER,**

**Plaintiff,**

**v.**

**Case No: 5:20-cv-597-GKS-PRL**

**COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL  
SECURITY,**

**Defendant.**

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**ORDER**


This case is before the Court on the Commissioner's opposed motion to stay the case for ninety days to produce the certified transcript of the record necessary for this case. (Doc. 10). Due to the global COVID-19 crisis, the SSA has taken certain steps to maximize social distancing, including suspending in-office services to the public and moving rapidly toward a virtual work environment. The SSA's Office of Appellate Operations ("OAO") in Falls Church, Virginia has been forced to redesign its business practices to allow for a mostly virtual transcript preparation process. Despite these changes, the OAO faces a significant backlog of work that has built up during the past months.

Plaintiff has filed a response to the motion setting forth objections including that Commissioner has failed to provide the specific status of preparing Plaintiff's transcript and while the quarantine measures have disrupted work activity, it is unacceptable to put Plaintiff's case on indefinite hold. (Doc. 11). Plaintiff's point is well taken. Given the unique challenges caused by the pandemic, the Court is inclined to afford additional time to the

Commissioner in order to obtain the transcript of the record in this case. However, the need for an extension must be balanced with Plaintiff's right to have his case decided.

Accordingly, the Commissioner's opposed motion to stay (Doc. 10) is GRANTED in part. The Commissioner shall file an answer and the transcript of the record for this case within 60 days. If additional time is needed, the Commissioner should file a declaration specific to this case and explain why the transcript of the record has not yet been prepared.

**DONE** and **ORDERED** in Ocala, Florida on February 23, 2021.



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PHILIP R. LAMMENS  
United States Magistrate Judge

Copies furnished to:

Counsel of Record  
Unrepresented Parties